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FM AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 4166

INFO RUEHSO/AMCONSUL SAO PAULO 3936

RUEHRI/AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO 7627

RUEHRG/AMCONSUL RECIFE 9430

RUEHZN/ENVIRONMENT SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY COLLECTIVE

RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 1575

RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC

RUEHRC/USDA FAS WASHDC

RUEAUSA/DEPT OF HHS WASHDC

RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 BRASILIA 000538

DEPT FOR OES/IHB AMBASSADOR LOFTIS

DEPT FOR WHA/BSC

USDA PASS TO APHIS

HHS PASS TO CDC

HHS FOR OGHA

SENSITIVE

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: TBIO KFLU CASC AEMR ASEC KSAF PREL PINR AMGT KFLO

KPAO, BR

SUBJECT: MGSF01: SWINE FLU AND BRAZIL: SITREP #4

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(U) THIS MESSAGE IS SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED AND NOT FOR INTERNET DISTRIBUTION. PLEASE HANDLE ACCORDINGLY.

¶1. (SBU) This report provides an update on developments in Brazil regarding the H1N1 flu outbreak.

NEW REPORTED CASES:

¶2. (SBU) There are no confirmed cases of the H1N1 flu in Brazil, which may be due more to the fact that Brazil does not yet have the ability to perform the necessary testing. Brazil expects to have that capability shortly. As of the afternoon of April 30, the Brazilian Ministry of Health, along with the National Agency on Health Vigilance (ANVISA), is monitoring 36 people in 11 different states who have flu-like symptoms and have traveled recently to Mexico or the United States. Two of these cases, one in the State of Sao Paulo and another in the State of Minas Gerais, are suspected of being potential cases of H1N1, but as noted above no tests have been performed yet to confirm this suspicion. A newspaper from northeastern Brazil reported that medical officials in the State of Paraiba suspect one woman, who recently returned from a trip to Texas, may be infected with H1N1. This woman has not been included in the Ministry of Health's list of monitored or suspected cases. In the State of Espirito Santo a man and a woman who recently returned from Mexico have been hospitalized with flu-like symptoms and are being monitored by state officials, but have also not been included in the Ministry of Health's record.

BRAZILIAN GOVERNMENT'S RECENT ACTIONS:

¶3. (SBU) In a public statement yesterday afternoon, April 29, Brazilian Health Minister Jose Gomez Temporao entreated the public not to self-medicate unnecessarily with anti-viral drugs such as Tamiflu and Relenza. Instead of sending flu samples from Brazil to the CDC or another WHO reference lab, Temporao explained that Brazil had received the genome of the H1N1 flu and would use that information to develop its own test. Temporao explained that it will take the ministry's scientists ten days to develop the correct testing assays to detect H1N1 in Brazil, and that once the assay is created testing will take place at the Oswaldo Cruz Fiocruz Institute (Fiocruz) in Rio de Janeiro.

¶4. (SBU) In his remarks, Temporao reaffirmed that Brazil has large enough stockpiles of flu medicine to treat nine million individuals.

He reassured the public that the Ministry of Health and ANVISA were working hard to monitor and regulate international travel coming into Brazilian airports; and that 52 hospitals in the country were prepared to handle potential H1N1 cases.

¶5. (SBU) On April 29, ANVISA released further information regarding how it is handling flights originating from Mexico and the United States. Pilots of these aircraft are being required to make an announcement to the passengers on board asking them to notify the crew if they are experiencing flu-like symptoms. This announcement is given in both English and Portuguese. Information about sick passengers is then relayed to Brazilian health authorities. Airlines are also requiring that masks be distributed to everyone on the plane in the case that a sick passenger is identified.

¶6. (SBU) In an extended effort to keep the public informed, on April 29, the Brazilian Government launched a public affairs campaign on local TV and radio stations. This campaign broadcasts facts and information related to the H1N1 flu outbreak, and counsels viewers and listeners on what they can do to prevent infection, and what to do/who to contact if they suspect infection has occurred.

DEVELOPMENTS WITH MISSION BRAZIL:

¶7. (SBU) Mission Brazil will be closed for a three day holiday weekend in Brazil (in observation of International Labor Day). We will continue to closely monitor the situation. The H1N1 Working Group for Mission Brazil met the morning of April 30 to discuss how to further prepare the Mission in response to the H1N1 flu outbreak.

The group will meet again at 9:00 am on May 4 to review new developments and to determine if precautions at each post are

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adequate to the current situation.

SOBEL